

I. OPENING

WELCOME FROM CONFERENCE SPONSOR

Interagency Committee on the MTS

Rear Admiral Paul Pluta, U.S. Coast Guard

Good morning everyone -- you early risers. I appreciate your taking time out of your busy day to join us and keep the flame alive for the Marine Transportation System initiative.

As Chairman of this Interagency Committee on the Marine Transportation System (MTS), I would like to welcome you to the Sixth Biennial MTS Research and Technology Coordination Conference. The first R&T Coordination Conference, which focused exclusively on waterways management, was held in the early 1990's and was hosted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, one of the many MTS partners. The U.S. Army Corps is again the conference host this year, with the focus now on the entire marine transportation system: waterways, ports, and their intermodal connectors.

Over the next three days, you will hear from many speakers and through breakout sessions, have the opportunity to discuss the research and technology needs of the MTS in the strategic action areas identified in the 1999 MTS Report to Congress: coordination, safety, competitiveness, infrastructure, environmental, and national security. Because national security is so important to all of us and in light of recent tragic

events, maritime security will have a larger place in this year's conference.

The MTS initiative can be credited, at least in part, for the rapid response to these recent events; in particular, the MTS coordination structure. At the national level, working relationships with appropriate federal agencies were already in place through the Interagency Committee and within the private sector, through the MTS National Advisory Council. At the local level, Harbor Safety Committees have been very active and very helpful to our Coast Guard Captains of the Port and Group Commanders as they distribute their resources in response to the maritime security threats.

We are fortunate today to have with us today Admiral James Loy, Commandant of the United States Coast Guard to talk about maritime security. Admiral Loy has been a staunch supporter of the MTS Initiative since its inception. Before becoming the Commandant, he served as the Coast Guard's Chief of Staff, in the trenches devising strategy for the outreach program to garner support for the initiative. When he became Commandant in 1998, the MTS Initiative was one of his five imperatives. He participated in the MTS National Conference and has been the Keynote Speaker at many MTS functions since that time, including the 1999 MTS R&T Conference held here two years ago. Admiral Loy has focused his leadership on restoring Coast Guard readiness and shaping the future of our Coast Guard. One of the key elements of shaping our future is the MTS Initiative.

As a career seagoing officer, Admiral Loy knows the marine transportation system firsthand. He has served tours aboard six Coast Guard cutters, including command of a patrol boat in combat during the Vietnam War, and command of major cutters in both the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. His seagoing experience and proven leadership uniquely qualify him to help define the new normalcy for maritime security, post-September 11. He has been, and will continue to work closely with Governor Ridge, the President's new Director of the Office of Homeland Security, and I'm sure as a result, the entire maritime community will benefit.

Please join me in giving a warm welcome to the Commandant of the Coast Guard, Admiral James Loy.